



ARLINGTON COUNTY URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION
2700 S. Taylor St., Arlington, VA 22206

September 12, 2012

The Honorable Mary Hynes, Chair
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Site Plan #263, 2311 Wilson Boulevard (Clean Technology Center)

Dear Madame Chair:

The Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) supports the proposed landscape improvements for the subject site plan and commends the applicant for responding to UFC's initial request to substantially increase the number of street trees and tree plantings. The existing site has over 30 trees that will be removed by this plan. But, the final proposal replaces these lost trees with 12 street trees, 5 canopy trees along the rear property line and 18 smaller ornamental trees. Also, the sidewalk width along Wilson Blvd., which has increased from 16 feet to a 20 foot minimum, has improved the overhead space for the canopy to grow without conflict with the building's 5 foot projection.

There remain, however, several concerns that we urge you to address before the final plans are approved. We request the following revisions:

- Eliminate the proposed tree grates for all street trees. Tree grates are intended to protect trees, but they actually harm trees by girdling the base of the tree over time and, because of lack of maintenance, becoming a tripping hazard. Also, tree grates typically require a footing that restricts root growth. Better alternatives than use of tree grates would be to plant the base of the trees with a suitable, dense ground cover to discourage walking on the root zone or, if they would not create a tripping hazard for pedestrians, to install small fences around the tree pits.
- Designate the canopy species proposed along the rear property line. Tall canopy trees are shown but not identified on the plans. A tall canopy tree would provide shade and improve compatibility with adjacent community.
- Improve compatibility concerns with the adjacent community by providing additional canopy trees planted off-site at the end of N. Adams Street, if acceptable to the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed site plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jean F. Amel".

Dean Amel, Chair



ARLINGTON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 900, Arlington, VA 22201
TEL 703-228-3689 FAX 703-228-7548 www.arlingtonva.us

September 6, 2012

Ms. Mary Hynes, Chair
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: 2311 Wilson Boulevard – Clean Technology Site Plan

Dear Chair Hynes:

I am writing to express the views of the Transportation Commission concerning County Manager's recommendation concerning the 2311 Wilson Boulevard – Clean Technology Site Plan. Our focus was on the transportation aspects of the site plan.

The Transportation Commission, by a vote of 9-0, approved a motion to recommend that the County Board:

- (1) Adopt the County Manager's recommendations for this site plan with the following specifics;**
- (2) Staff should examine the possibility of dedicated short term street parking for on-site daycare drop-off/pick-up;**
- (3) Within 5 years, the County Manager may ask the applicant to construct a fence if needed to secure North Adams Street;**
- (4) The Adams Street park curb will provide at grade bicycle access**
- (5) The external entrance to the building shall be the primary entrance for the on-site day care**
- (6) Staff shall examine on-site storage for child-toting bicycle wagons**

The Commission heard these items at its meeting on August 30, 2012. The Commission received a presentation from County staff. Commissioners heard from one speaker: James Lantelme from the Lyon Village Civic Association. Mr. Lantelme noted the Civic Association's opposition to the potential fence on North Adams Street for the time being. Present and voting at the meeting were Commissioners Gearhart, Everline, Hubbard, Ortiz, Forinash, Armbruster, Torma, Lynott, and Grant.

In discussion, Commissioners focused on the transportation aspects of the application. With respect to sidewalk widths, Commissioners noted the importance of ensuring the proposed day-care center is safe for children. Of particular interest was the concept of dedicated on street parking as opposed to a garage focused entrance. Commissioners felt the garage option was potentially unsafe for children. Commissioners also noted that the operation permit for the day care should provide preference for local families, thereby reducing the number of automobile trips necessary to and from the day care.

I would be glad to answer any questions (703-338-6476).

Sincerely,

John Grant
Chairman

LYON VILLAGE CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

September 7, 2012

Arlington County Board Chairman Mary Hynes
Board Member Jay Fissette
Board Member J. Walter Tejada
Board Member Christopher Zimmerman
Board Member Libby Garvey

Re: 2311 Wilson Boulevard – Clean Technology Center

Dear Chairman Hynes and Members of the County Board:

I am writing on behalf of the Lyon Village Citizens Association to respectfully request a deferral of your consideration of the above site plan scheduled for the September 18th County Board meeting. We believe the project has substantial unresolved issues that would frustrate the Board members' ability to make an informed decision and, if approved, result in a bad precedent for neighborhood edge developments.

Due to its history stretching back almost twenty years, this is one of the most complicated site plans the county has had to consider. As a practical matter, this will be the third iteration of the site plan and deals with one of the two properties left undeveloped under the existing site plan.

During the series of Site Plan Review Committee meetings stretching over the course of a year, the LVCA raised concerns including the height of the building, lack of setbacks or taper on the side facing the neighborhood, pedestrian access along the former Custis Road right-of-way, sidewalk widths around the project, density calculations carried over from the current site plan and the lack of value of community benefits offered by the developer for additional density.

This project went before the Planning Commission on Tuesday evening September 4th with many of our concerns not addressed and without a planning staff recommendation. Indeed, the week before this meeting the developer, at the behest of County planning staff concerned about the taper into the neighborhood, met with us to raise possible modifications to the shape of the building facing the neighborhood. At the meeting a majority of the commissioners raised their own concerns over the lack of taper facing the neighborhood, the details about the proposed child-care center and details about the offered conference center. While they voted 6-5 to send the project on to the County Board, they also voted for numerous amendments including the direction for the developer to work with the LVCA to come up with another option for tapering the building, and with staff to provide more details on the conditions for the child-care and conference centers.

There is simply not sufficient time before the scheduled Board meeting for the developer, LVCA and staff to come up with well-thought-through modifications to the building and enforceable conditions for the child-care and conference centers. We thus request deferral of your consideration of this site plan. Should that not be possible, this letter should be considered the LVCA's objection to the site plan with our request that you vote to deny.

Sincerely yours
James T. Lantelme
President
Lyon Village Citizens Association
703-618-4315

cc: Barbara Donnell
Samia Byrd
Michael T. Foster